

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

HBD Industries Inc

South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Hbd Industries Reduces Set-Up Times, Saves Costs

Client Profile:

HBD Industries, Inc., through its flagship brand, Thermoid®, has been producing rubber products for a wide range of industries for more than 85 years, including hoses, ducting, and--with the 1986 acquisition of the BFGoodrich industrial rubber group--bulk transfer and hand-built hoses, v-belts, conveyor belting, rubber rolls, and rubber bands. The company's products are sold worldwide. HBD Industries is headquartered in Dublin, Ohio, and has seven operations, including a facility in Elgin, South Carolina. This facility employs approximately 200 people.

Situation:

Key managers at HBD Industries had previously participated in several lean manufacturing projects, including Lean 101 training and Value Stream Mapping, with the help of the South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SCMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, and Central Carolina Technical College. In September 2003, the company decided to reduce batch sizes and grow sales by increasing product output on one press in the plant. HBD once again asked SCMEP for assistance.

Solution:

SCMEP put together a six-person team and designed a four-day kaizen event aimed at achieving HBD's goals. During the first day of the event, participants watched the employee in charge of the press as he changed molds. They listed each of his steps in the process and set a goal to reduce set-up time on the machine. Next, the team worked on the press to make changes it deemed appropriate to improve set-up and changeover times. On the fourth day, the company implemented the new process.

The project exceeded HBD's expectations by surpassing its original goals. In the process, the team discovered a new and safer method of removing molds from the press during changeover times that made it easier and less precarious for the machine operator to perform his job. The new process even allows the operator to change molds while they are still hot, further reducing set-up time by eliminating the need for a three hour cool-down period prior to starting the changeover process.

Results:

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Reduced set-up time from 160 minutes to 25 minutes.
Addressed and solved safety issues.
Saved approximately \$1,800 per month in labor costs.
Planning to implement improvements in other plant areas, with similar net impacts expected.

Testimonial:

“Addressing these safety concerns was an added bonus resulting from the [South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership-led] kaizen event.”

Dick McCombs, General Manager